Subject: Dead Sperm Whale Found by PISCES
From: Keith Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2010 11:49:04 -0500
To: Lisa Desfosse <Lisa.Desfosse@noaa.gov>, "Karen.Mitchell" <Karen.Mitchell@noaa.gov>, Terry Henwood <Terry.Henwood@noaa.gov>, Christopher T Gledhill <Christopher.T.Gledhill@noaa.gov>, Lance Garrison <Lance.Garrison@noaa.gov>

Lisa,

The PISCES found a dead sperm whale 150mile south of Pascagoula this morning. Blair Mase has been in contact with Paul Felts to discuss photos and potential biological samples. I talked to the CO and he made it clear to everyone on board that none of the photographs are to be disseminated outside of official channels.

Keith

--
Keith D. Mullin, Ph.D.
Marine Mammal Program Manager
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
3209 Frederic Street
P.O. Drawer 1207
Pascagoula, MS 39568
USA

Phone: 228-549-1632
Email: Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov

Subject: Dead floating sperm whale in Gulf of Mexico
From: Blair.Mase@noaa.gov
Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2010 13:17:53 -0400
To: Mike Ziccardi <mhziccardi@ucdavis.edu>, Sarah Wilkin <Sarah.Wilkin@noaa.gov>, Carrie W Hubard <Carrie.W.Hubard@noaa.gov>, Teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>, Janet Whaley <Janet.Whaley@noaa.gov>, Trevor Spradlin <Trevor.Spradlin@noaa.gov>, erin fougeres <erin.fougeres@noaa.gov>, Lance Garrison <Lance.Garrison@noaa.gov>, Keith D Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>, Kevin Barry <Kevin.Barry@noaa.gov>, Patricia Rosel <Patricia.Rosel@noaa.gov>, kim amendola <kim.amendola@noaa.gov>, Laura Engleby <Laura.Engleby@noaa.gov>, Liz Tuohy-Sheen <Elizabeth.Tuohy-Sheen@noaa.gov>, Bonnie Ponwith <Bonnie.Ponwith@noaa.gov>, Theo Brainerd <Theo.Brainerd@noaa.gov>, Laura A Dias <laura.dias@noaa.gov>

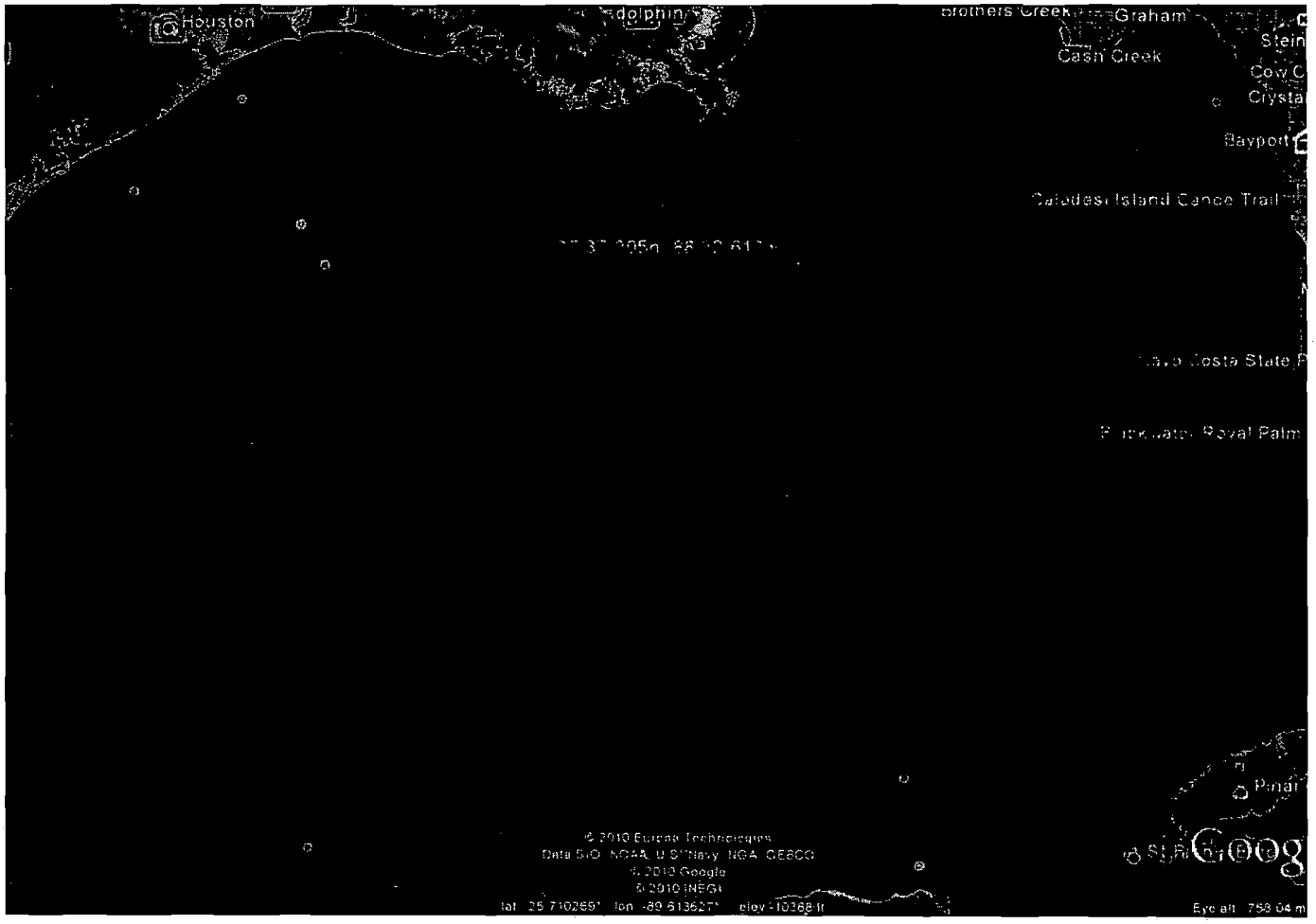
Hi all,
John Pelts, the Field Party Chief on the NOAA Ship PISCES reported a dead, 25ft long sperm whale today. The whale's location is 150 miles due south of Pascagoula, Mississippi. (see attached map). The whale has been described as bloated with organs extruding. There are numerous tiger sharks feeding on the whale. There is no oil in the vicinity of the whale. Due to the long distance from the nearest point of land I have asked for the following :

1) photo documentation of the whale
2) skin and blubber sample
3) external swabbing of the skin
4) marking of the whale. (they will be using yellow safety paint)

John is going to clear it with the captain but does not see an issue. I will be following up with the Wildlife Branch HQ and SERO to discuss any additional action for this whale (i.e., the possibility of sending out a team to sample the whale or aerial recon).

Will keep you posted.

Blair



sperm whale loc6_15.jpg	Content-Type: image/jpeg Content-Encoding: base64

Subject: Sperm Whale
From: Paul.Felts@noaa.gov
Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2010 19:52:27 +0100
To: Blair.Mase@noaa.gov
CC: Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov, Terry.Henwood@noaa.gov, Paul.Felts@noaa.gov

Mrs. Mase,

A dead Sperm whale was observed by the bridge of the NOAA ship Pisces during transit to south Texas to begin our west gulf reef fish survey. According to the bridge, it was first observed at latitude 27 37.205 N and longitude 088 22.612 W at approximately 10:15 a.m. on June 15, 2010. The vessel approached the whale along the starboard side and a rough estimate of length was made by walking the deck. We assessed the length to be 20 - 25 feet long. The whale was floating on it's side with approximately 2 - 2.5 feet of the carcass exposed above the water. From the looks of it's lower jaw, we determined it to be a sperm whale. Numerous pictures and some video was taken from the bridge as wells the lower decks.

As of now, the ship's captain has asked all personell who took pictures not to transmit them in any form until further notice. Due to bandwidth constraints of the ship, I am sending the pictures one at a time. You should recieve a total of 4 photographs.

We were able to get a swab of the black, burned looking skin as well as collect a blubber/tissue sample. The whale carcass was then drizzled with blue paint to mark it. Both samples were wrapped in tin foil, sealed with duct tape and frozen. The appropriate chain of custody forms were properly filled out. Please return mail me as to the status of pictures taken by crew of the dead whale.

V/r,

Paul Felts

Subject: Re: Sperm Whale
From: Blair.Mase@noaa.gov
Date: Tue, 15 Jun 2010 18:05:15 -0400
To: Paul.Felts@noaa.gov
CC: Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov, Terry.Henwood@noaa.gov

Thank you very much Paul. The burned skin you referred to just looks like sunburn. However we will test for evidence or signs of fire burning just to make sure with the sample you collected. When you have a chance please send a photo of the whale with the paint on it.

Blair

----- Original Message -----
From: Paul.Felts@noaa.gov
Date: Tuesday, June 15, 2010 2:52 pm
Subject: Sperm Whale
To: Blair.Mase@noaa.gov
Cc: Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov, Terry.Henwood@noaa.gov, Paul.Felts@noaa.gov

Mrs. Mase,

A dead Sperm whale was observed by the bridge of the NOAA ship Pisces during transit to south Texas to begin our west gulf reef fish survey. According to the bridge, it was first observed at latitude 27 37.205 N and longitude 088 22.612 W at approximately 10:15 a.m. on June 15, 2010. The vessel approached the whale along the starboard side and a rough estimate of length was made by walking the deck. We assessed the length to be 20 - 25 feet long. The whale was floating on it's side with approximately 2 - 2.5 feet of the carcass exposed above the water. From the looks of it's lower jaw, we determined it to be a sperm whale. Numerous pictures and some video was taken from the bridge as wells the lower decks.

As of now, the ship's captain has asked all personell who took pictures not to transmit them in any form until further notice. Due to bandwidth constraints of the ship, I am sending the pictures one at a time. You should recieve a total of 4 photographs.

We were able to get a swab of the black, burned looking skin as well as collect a blubber/tissue sample. The whale carcass was then drizzled with blue paint to mark it. Both samples were wrapped in tin foil,sealed with duct tape and frozen. The appropriate chain of custody forms were properly filled out. Please return mail me as to the status of pictures taken by crew of the dead whale.

V/r,

Paul Felts

Subject: Re: Pisces and the Dead Sperm Whale
From: Blair.Mase@noaa.gov
Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2010 15:42:06 -0400
To: "Commanding Officer, NOAA Ship Pisces" <CO.Pisces@noaa.gov>
CC: "David L. Hall" <David.L.Hall@noaa.gov>, Keith Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>

I just spoke to the command center in Houma and they have asked that you all not post the photos to anyone as they are part of an official investigation.. Photos may be posted or sent along once they have been approved by the JIC. I will let you know as soon as this occurs. Thanks for your cooperation and let me know if you still have any questions on this.

Blair

----- Original Message -----
From: "Commanding Officer, NOAA Ship Pisces" <CO.Pisces@noaa.gov>
Date: Wednesday, June 16, 2010 3:16 pm
Subject: Pisces and the Dead Sperm Whale
To: "David L. Hall" <David.L.Hall@noaa.gov>, Blair Mase <Blair.Mase@noaa.gov>, Keith Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>

> Any chance I can give the green light to let folks share what we saw yesterday with loved ones ashore yet?
>
> Already learned (through the XO's wife) of a WM posting something on their Facebook page to the effect that they saw "a dead critter" yesterday but are being censored by NOAA from saying anything else...followed by a lot of indignant comments from others.
>
> Please advise,
>
> JMA
> --
> ==========
> HONOR, RESPECT, COMMITMENT
> ==========
>
> Lieutenant Commander Jeremy M. Adams, NOAA
> Commanding Officer, NOAA Ship PISCES, R226
> 151 Watts Avenue
> Pascagoula, MS 39567
>
> 228-369-5400 CO Cell
> 228-369-5405 OOD Cell
> 228-769-0307 Port Office
> 228-769-9529 Port Office Fax
>
> 504-201-0079 Ship Cell
> 808-659-5281 Ship Iridium
> 301-713-7774 Ship VoIP
>
> 870-336-900-245 Inmarsat
>
> ==========

Subject: Re: stranded sperm whale
From: Christine Patrick <Christine.Patrick@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2010 10:19:56 -0400
To: Teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>, Justin kenney <Justin.kenney@noaa.gov>, David L Hall <David.L.Hall@noaa.gov>
CC: Blair Mase <Blair.Mase@noaa.gov>, Lance Garrison <Lance.Garrison@noaa.gov>, Simeon Hahn <Simeon.Hahn@noaa.gov>, Helen Golde <Helen.Golde@noaa.gov>, Keith D Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>

Thanks, Teri and Blair!

Attached is a cleaned-up version (no Track Changes) -- I accepted all Teri's and removed some extra words that I know Teri meant to delete (hard to tell when you're viewing it in Track Changes), and corrected something here or there (i.e. NOAA Ship Gordon Gunter vice Gunther).

Still looking for two pieces of info in this statement: description of where the whale was found [Teri asks for this to be specified both as distance from a port and distance and direction from the DWH spill source], and when the Pisces will be back in port. I am looping in OMAO Public Affairs lead David Hall to ask if he can answer or help get the answer for either of those.

Thanks!
Christine

Teri Rowles wrote:

> Attached are my edits to the note. I was unable to get with Keith or Lance to confirm the informaiton on the cruise. I am hoping they can comment right now to ensure that I have the right information. Please let me know if there are issues or questions. THANK YOU

--
Christine Patrick
Public Affairs Specialist
NOAA Communications & External Affairs
in NOAA Fisheries
christine.patrick@noaa.gov
202.407.3117
stationed in the Gulf through 6/18

Whale_statement_6-16-10.doc	**Content-Type:** application/msword **Content-Encoding:** base64

On Tuesday, June 15, the NOAA ship *Pisces* reported a dead sperm whale floating **[172 miles offshore [where] or otherwise describe location].** As soon as the whale was sighted, *Pisces* Field Party Chief Paul Felks called the marine mammal hotline to report the finding to the Wildlife Branch of the Unified Command and NOAA's marine mammal experts.

Comment [tkr1]: Please track it as distance from a port and distance and direction from the DWH spill source

Based on the estimated size of the whale, scientists believe it is a sub-adult. Its condition suggests it may have been dead for between several days to more than a week. Although it was not found in oiled water, NOAA marine mammal experts are looking into where the whale carcass may have drifted from, based on hindcasting analysis.

n accordance with the Wildlife Branch protocols, NOAA's Southeast Regional Marine Mammal Stranding Coordinator Blair Mase requested that the NOAA field crew take photographs of the approximately 25-foot whale, collect skin swab for oil analyses, collect blubber and skin samples for analyses, and measure its height in the water. Although the whale is very decomposed, the photographs and samples will help scientists better understand how long it has been dead. The blubber and skin samples will be used for genetic analyses and to determine the sex of the animal. Measurements of the whale floating in the water will be used to determine how far and how fast it might have floated from where it died. The carcass has been marked so that aerial reconnaissance teams will be able to identify the individual and not report it as a new mortality.

Because the whale carcass is decomposed, sharks have been eating on it, it is too far from shore to tow it in, and its organs are no longer intact, it will be impossible for scientists to confirm an exact cause of death. Samples collected from this carcass will be stored under proper protocols and handed off when the *Pisces* comes to port on **[date],** or possibly if another boat is sent to meet the *Pisces*. Full analysis of the samples will take several weeks.

NOAA and the Unified Command Wildlife Branch have had numerous reports of sperm whales sighted swimming in the oil, but this is the first confirmed report of a dead whale since the Deepwater Horizon oil spill began. NOAA remains concerned about sperm whales, the only endangered resident cetacean in the upper Gulf of Mexico, because their prime habitat and feeding area are in the upper Gulf offshore area, they feed and live at depth in areas where undersea and aerial dispersants and oil have been present for many weeks, and they feed on deepwater squid which may also be impacted by the oil and dispersants. Due to our concern for the impacts of this spill on offshore cetaceans, the NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter* sailed yesterday for a multi-week cruise to do photo-identification, assessments, and biopsy of sperm whales, Bryde's whales, and other offshore cetaceans as well as to tag sperm whales and Bryde's whales and to conduct prey density studies. In addition, response efforts are continuing for nearshore and offshore stranding investigations to determine cause of death or illness and to collect appropriate data and samples when possible as well as aerial surveys for cetaceans throughout the area. The information gained from these efforts will assist in assessment of the impacts of this event on cetaceans in the Gulf of Mexico.

Subject: stranded sperm whale
From: Teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 16 Jun 2010 11:02:12 -0400
To: Blair Mase <Blair.Mase@noaa.gov>, Lance Garrison <Lance.Garrison@noaa.gov>, Simeon Hahn <Simeon.Hahn@noaa.gov>, Christine Patrick <Christine.Patrick@noaa.gov>, Justin kenney <Justin.kenney@noaa.gov>, Helen Golde <Helen.Golde@noaa.gov>, Keith D Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>, Teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>

Attached are my edits to the note. I was unable to get with Keith or Lance to confirm the informaiton on the cruise. I am hoping they can comment right now to ensure that I have the right information. Please let me know if there are issues or questions. THANK YOU

Whale_statement_6-15-10_tkr_bm.doc	**Content-Type:** application/msword **Content-Encoding:** base64

On Tuesday, June 15, the NOAA ship *Pisces* reported ~~seeing~~ a dead sperm whale floating **[172 miles offshore [where] or otherwise describe location].** As soon as the whale was sighted, *Pisces* Field Party Chief Paul Felks called the marine mammal hotline to report the finding to the Wildlife Branch of the Unified Command and NOAA's marine mammal experts.

Based on the estimated size of the whale, scientists believe it is a sub-adult. Its condition ~~as described by the crew aboard the Pisces~~ suggests it may have been dead for between several ~~2 to 5~~ days to more than a week. Although it was not found in oiled water, NOAA marine mammal experts are looking into where the whale carcass may have drifted~~dolphins came from~~believe, based on ~~h~~hindcasting analysis.

~~ow far the carcass could have floated in that time period, that the whale probably came from an oiled area.~~

In accordance with the Wildlife Branch protocols, NOAA's Southeast Regional Marine Mammal Stranding Coordinator~~marine mammal biologists~~ Blair ~~Mase Guthrie (or just Mase?)~~ requested that the NOAA field crew~~field party~~ take photographs of the approximately 25-foot whale, collect skin swab for oil analyses, collect blubber and skin samples for analyses, and measure its height in the water. Although the whale is very decomposed, the photographs and samples will help scientists better understand ~~about~~ how long it has been dead~~, and if further biological samples need to be collected~~. The blubber and skin samples will be used for genetic analyses and to determine the sex of the animal. ~~help scientists fill in background information and~~ determine the a~~genetics~~ and sex of the whale, the length of time it was dead and the chemical composition of the blubber and skin.~~, as well as whether there is oil on the whale's skin~~. Measurements of the whale floating in the water will be used to determine ~~help them determine~~ how far and how fast it might have floated from ~~where it died~~its location of death. The carcass has been ~~will be~~ marked so that aerial reconnaissance teams will be able to identify the individual and not report it as a new mortality.

Because the whale carcass is ~~decomposed~~ decomposed, sharks have been eating on it, it is too far from shore to tow it in, and its organs are no longer intact, it will be impossible for scientists to confirm an exact cause of death~~, though scientists expect they will be able to define whether it was exposed to oil before its death~~. Samples collected from this carcass will be stored under proper protocols and handed off when the Pisces comes to port on **[date],** or possibly if another boat is sent to meet the Pisces~~ during its planned mission to sample fish.~~ Full analysis of the samples will take several weeks.

~~Marine mammal experts know, based on experience with killer whales during and after the Exxon Valdez, that whales exposed to oil can develop respiratory infections and irritation after breathing in the volatile fumes from oil at the surface. Their skin and eyes can also be irritated and damaged, and oil can be pulled into their blowholes. Whales with already comprised health that are then exposed to oil can succumb, making oil the proximate cause of death.~~

NOAA and the Unified Command Wildlife Branch have had numerous reports of sperm whales sighted swimming in the oil, but this is the first confirmed report of a dead whale since the Deepwater Horizon BP oil spill **[are we referring to it with a different term?]** began. NOAA remains concerned about sperm whales, the only endangered resident cetacean in the upper Gulf of Mexico, because their prime habitat

Comment [tkr1]: Please track it as distance from a port and distance and direction from the DWH spill source

Comment [tkr2]: This is speculation and cannot be verified. We are asking for a hindcast from ORR to get this done. We should be able to give a good estimate of the area of death once that is done. SO we should not say this now.

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and feeding area are in the upper Gulf off shore area, they feed and live at depth in areas where undersea and aerial dispersants and oil have been present for many weeks, and they feed on deepwater squid which may also be impacted by the oil and dispersants. Due to our concern for the impacts of this spill on offshore cetaceans, the NOAA ship Gordon Gunther sailed yesterday for a multi-week cruise to do photo-identification, assessments, and biopsy of sperm whales, Bryde's whales, and other off shore cetaceans as well as to tag sperm whales and Bryde's whales and to conduct prey density studies. In addition, response efforts for near shore and off shore stranding investigations to determine cause of death or illness and to collect appropriate data and samples when possible as well as aerial surveys for cetaceans throughout the area are continuing. The information gained from these efforts will assist in assessment of the impacts of this event on cetaceans in the Gulf of Mexico. ~~Because this is the first report of a dead whale, but it has been dead for several days, NOAA is confirming with Unified Command ships and boats that a dead whale has not previously been sighted by others.~~

Comment [tkr3]: Note this is the second obs of a dead whale, the first one could not be confirmed.

Subject: dead sperm whale press release
From: Connie Barclay <Connie.Barclay@noaa.gov>
Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2010 11:48:06 -0400
To: Keith D Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>

NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Justin Kenney
202-821-6310

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 16, 2010

NOAA Conducts Tests to Determine Fate of Whale Found Dead in Gulf of Mexico
Whale Not Found in Oiled Water, but Cause of Death Unknown

On Tuesday, June 15, the NOAA Ship *Pisces* reported a dead sperm whale floating 77 miles due south of the Deepwater Horizon spill site. NOAA is currently in the process of conducting thorough testing to determine the circumstances surrounding the mammal's death, as well as collect information about its life. This is the first dead whale reported since BP's rig exploded on April 20 It was not found in oiled waters; however, its location of death is unknown.

As soon as the whale was sighted, *Pisces* Field Party Chief Paul Felts called the marine mammal hotline to report the finding to the Wildlife Branch of the Unified Command and NOAA's marine mammal experts.

Based on the estimated size of the whale, scientists believe it is a sub-adult. Its condition suggests it may have been dead for between several days to more than a week. Although it was not found in oiled water, NOAA marine mammal experts are using hindcasting analysis to look into the location from which the whale carcass may have drifted.

While it is impossible to confirm whether exposure to oil was the cause of death, NOAA is reviewing whether factors such as ship strikes and entanglement can be eliminated. Samples collected from this carcass will be stored under proper protocols and handed off when the *Pisces* comes to port on July 2, or possibly if another boat is sent to meet the *Pisces*. Full analysis of the samples will take several weeks.

In accordance with the Wildlife Branch protocols, NOAA's Southeast Regional Marine Mammal Stranding Coordinator Blair Mase requested that the NOAA field crew take photographs of the approximately 25-foot whale, collect skin swab for oil analysis, collect blubber and skin samples for analysis, and measure its height in the water. Although the whale is very decomposed, the photographs and samples will help scientists better understand how long it has been dead. The blubber and skin samples will be used for genetic analysis and to determine the sex of the animal. Measurements of the whale floating in the water will be used to determine how far and how fast it might have floated from where it died. The carcass has been marked so that aerial reconnaissance teams will be able to identify the individual and will not report it as a new mortality.

NOAA and the Unified Command Wildlife Branch have had numerous reports of sperm whales seen swimming in the oil, but this is the first confirmed report of a dead whale since the BP oil

spill began. NOAA remains concerned about sperm whales, which are the only endangered resident cetaceans in the upper Gulf of Mexico. Sperm whales spend most of their time in the upper Gulf offshore area, live at depth in areas where subsurface dispersants and oil are present, and feed on deepwater squid, which may also be impacted by the oil and dispersants.

The NOAA Ship *Gordon Gunter* sailed yesterday for a multi-week cruise to do photo identification, assessments, tagging, biopsies, and prey-density studies for sperm whales and Bryde's whales. Nearshore and offshore response efforts are continuing, and include investigations to determine cause of death or illness for dolphins that have stranded and aerial surveys for cetaceans throughout the area. The information gained from these efforts will help assess the impacts of this event on cetaceans in the Gulf of Mexico.

- 30 -

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Connie Barclay
Director, NOAA Fisheries Communications
NOAA Communications & External Affairs
(301)713-2370 work/(202)441-2398 cell
Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/noaa.lubchenco

TO KYLE BAKER

Epperson, Deborah

From: Epperson, Deborah
Sent: Thursday, July 01, 2010 7:03 PM
To: 'Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov'
Cc: Kyle Baker
Subject: oiled sperm whale
Attachments: Oil-Soaked Sperm Whale Report from Gilavar.doc

Teri - As I mentionod at our meeting yestorday. The whale was reported to the hotline...here are the details of the call below. I don't know why the information was not given to you. I have also attached the sighting report from the seismic vessel.

Our Lead MMO on the Gilivar, Meghan Piercy, made the call to 1-866-557-1401 at 16:31 local time on the afternoon of June 15. A woman from the BP hotline took her information regarding the oiled sperm whale. About 30 to 45 minutes later Meghan received a call from Elizabeth "Liz" Tuohy-Sheen NOAA-Fisheries Marine Mammal Stranding Program. Meghan was told if she called in earlier they might have been able to send someone out. Liz also passed the information to someone from BP by the name of Kim W. Colburn.

Deborah Epperson

7/7/2010

RPS GeoCet

PROTECTED SPECIES RECORDING FORM

DETECTION

Date	Project number	Time at first detection (UTC)	Time at last detection (UTC)	Visual detection number	Acoustic detection number
2010-06-15		14:28	15:45	53	n/a

Regulatory reference number	Vessel name	Survey type	Observer(s)

Detection was made	Detection was first made
visually	visually by observer keeping a continuous watch

Latitude of vessel	Longitude of vessel	Bearing of vessel (degrees)	Water depth (metres)
28.97970°N	088.17377°W	311	1009

Swell height (metres)	Beaufort sea state	Precipitation	Visibility (km)	Cloud cover (%)	Glare severity and direction
<2	0	none	>5	60	none

Common name	Scientific name	Certainty of identification
Sperm whale	*Physeter macrocephalus*	definite

Total number	Number of adults	Number of juveniles	Bearing to animal(s) when first detected (degrees)	Range to animal(s) when first detected (metres)
5	4	1	300	1200

Description (include features such as overall size; shape of head; colour and pattern; size, shape, and position of dorsal fin; height, direction, and shape of blow; etc.)

These whales had very large heads, blowholes positioned at the front of their heads and off to the left, large dorsal humps, deeply notched flukes, and wrinkled skin around each side of their dorsal humps.

Visual sighting and/or Acoustic detection details (note behavior, especially changes in relation to gun activity and distance from gun array)

This sighting was comprised of three subsets of sightings, but because we cannot definitively say that they were not duplicate sightings, we are including them as one sighting. At 14:28 UTC one whale was observed for approximatialy 3 minutes logging and blowing on the surface approximately 1200 meters ahead of the Gilavar's port bow. At 14:31, another whale surfaced and began to also log and blow. At 14:32, the first whale fluked and dove. The second whale, which was approximately 8 meters in length and had a very large, prominent dorsal hump, fluked and dove at 14:39. All was quiet until 14:55, when a juvenile whale approximately 8 meters long, surfaced approximately 400 meters ahead of the ship. It proceeded to log and blow, heading in the same direction as the Gilavar, entering the exclusion zone at 14:58. A shutdown was promptly called. This whale drifted down the port side of the ship, approximately 10 meters from the ship and it was then, that observers noticed that the young whale was covered in an oil sheen. At 14:10 four large sperm whales appeared approximately 1500 meters ahead and to the port of the Gilavar. At 14:11 they changed directions to start heading in a direction opposite of the ship. These whales continued to blow and log and drifted between the Searcher and the Gilavar, entering the Gilavar's exclusion zone. Their entrance into the exclusion zone caused the shutdown that was already in progress, to be extended. The first whale was last seen at 14:12. The four adults exited the exclusion zone at 14:14. It is very possible that these adults were also covered in the same oil that the juvenile whale was covered in, as the water quality was very poor with irredescent sheens all over the surface. A large plume of smoke seemingly coming from straight off the water was visible approximately 8nm to the W. Radio traffic indicates that there is controlled burning of the oil in the area. Water color is greenish-

			brown, with patches of iridescent sheens scattered all over. Small brown globs of what appear to be oil and possibly oil dispersant infiltrate the water. The Gilavar obviously had nothing to do with the oil injury of these animals. The oil clearly came from the leak of the Deepwater Horizon well, which is approximately 20 miles SSE of where the whales were sighted.	
Direction of travel / first approach (relative to vessel)			**Initial compass heading** (degrees)	**Final compass heading** (degrees)
away from vessel			270	130
Closest distance of animals to airguns/source (metres)	**Closest distance of animals to vessel** (metres)		**Source activity at initial detection**	**Source activity at final detection**
200	10		full power while on survey line	not firing
Time at closest approach (UTC)	**Distance during soft start** (m)		**Source mitigation action(s) required**	**Strike avoidance maneuvers required**
	First	**Closest** **Last**		
14:59	n/a	n/a n/a	none	no
			Total duration of mitigation action(s) (HH:MM)	**Total duration of production loss due to mitigation** (HH:MM)
			n/a	n/a
			Other notes or comments	

Subject: Re: [Fwd: oiled sperm whale report]
From: Keith Mullin <Keith.D.Mullin@noaa.gov>
Date: Wed, 07 Jul 2010 15:35:54 -0500
To: Laura Engleby <Laura.Engleby@noaa.gov>

Thanks. I will pass this on to the GUNTER too.

Keith

Laura Engleby wrote:

> Hi Keith,
>
> I thought you might find this of interest.
>
> ---
>
> Subject:
> oiled sperm whale report
> From:
> Kyle Baker <Kyle.Baker@noaa.gov>
> Date:
> Wed, 07 Jul 2010 15:53:31 -0400
> To:
> teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>, _NMFS SER Emergency Consult
> <nmfs.ser.emergency.consult@noaa.gov>
>
> To:
> teri Rowles <Teri.Rowles@noaa.gov>, _NMFS SER Emergency Consult
> <nmfs.ser.emergency.consult@noaa.gov>
>
> Apparently there are also photos of the whales which I do not yet have. For some reason, this report was not logged when first reported.
>
> -Kyle

--
Keith D. Mullin, Ph.D.
Marine Mammal Program Manager
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
3209 Frederic Street
P.O. Drawer 1207
Pascagoula, MS 39568
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Stacy,Brian A

From: Michael Ziccardi [mhziccardi@ucdavis.edu]
Sent: Thursday, May 20, 2010 3:51 PM
To: Barbara Schroeder
Cc: Stacy,Brian A
Subject: Re: Narrative on handling of the first oiled turtle

Hi Brian-

I think that if Audubon is OK w/ it, sending it out to the lead rehab folks would be fine if we can stress that this info should be kept in-house and not distributed widely (e.g., to the media). I would make it a protected PDF before sending. Thx!

MZ

On May 20, 2010, at 2:12 PM, Barbara Schroeder wrote:

> this looks like it would be very helpful; they clearly know what they are doing and the animal is obviously in great hands
>
> and, since you already know I am a bleeding heart turtle hugger, I can go ahead and say this just really makes my heart hurt thinking of the likely thousands of other turtles out in the Gulf experiencing the same thing with no hope in sight
>
> and finally, I have consulted my drivers license again, and we should change arms and legs to front and rear flippers before we send this out
>
> P.S., my drivers license is actually stuck in our car which is at BWI airport until my husband gets back from travel, so I'm practicing vet medicine illegally :o
>
> Barbara Schroeder
> National Sea Turtle Coordinator
> National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - NMFS
>
> email: barbara.schroeder@noaa.gov
> Phone: 301-713-2322
>
> To cherish what remains of the earth, and to foster its renewal, is our only legitimate hope.
> Wendell Berry

Stacy,Brian A wrote:

> Hi Mike and Barbara,

Meghan mentioned that some of the rehabbers are nervous about what to expect. She and I both felt it might calm folks a bit to hear how the first encounter went. Would either of you have a problem if the narrative below from the Audubon staff was circulated? - Brian

The animal we received yesterday (5/18) is a 820 gram juvenile Kemps, oiled between 50-75% of its body, most prominent over the head (especially mouth, eyes and nares), neck, skin (axilla, thighs, cloaca) and cranial 2/3 of the carapace. The oil was brown/rust red in color with very sticky consistency, and did not smell strongly.

The animal was otherwise fairly robust in body condition and fairly active throughout evaluation and treatment.

The areas of highest concern to us were and still are the eyes, mouth and nares. The mouth was entirely coated and while the animal did not appear to have any difficulty breathing, oil was cleary coating the external nares as well as the upper hard palate. The superior lateral aspect of both corneas and limbus had globs of oil on them though we did not see any fluorescein stain uptake that would indicate ulceration.

We cleaned a small part of the neck by scrubbing with Nolvasan gauze to obtain blood- iStat parameters were pretty normal for an animal this size, then gave SQ fluids with Vit B complex for support. Also gave 20mg/kg ceftazidime for prophylaxis. We decided to wash right away since the turtle seemed stable.

For washing- we put some gentamicin ophthalmic ointment in and over the eyes then used Dawn and some fairly soft large scrub brushes which worked great on the carapace and flippers, but was difficult to get into skin folds. Michele came up with the idea to use a soft toothbrush, and that was very effective in cleaning the skin folds around the arms, legs and neck as the turtle was frequently inclined to pull its head back, and particularly with such a small animal. We rinsed frequently so as to see the progression and made great progress with the external oil after about 30 minutes.

The mouth was more difficult- we used a speculum to open then wound gauze around a hemostat to swab the inside. We tried putting a bit of mayonaise on the gauze too, to try and soften the oil, but in the end plain gauze worked okay, but took numerous swabs.

The eyes were also very difficult- we tried using mayonaise again on a cotton tip to get it off the cornea but did not have much luck- kept closing his eyes which made it hard to get to, but

did get a bit more.

We waited till we were done washing to give Toxiban since it was just the one animal then gavaged 6ml/kg and put him in some shallow fresh water for the night, with the plan to give additional fluids, more toxiban and a further wash/scrub the next day.

Today we did just that- a bit more of the oil was off the eyes today- just a small tinge at the limbus and in the skin folds around the eyes, and still no ulcers evident. Continued to try to work out some oil using cotton tips and gentamicin ophthalmic and got a bit more out. Scrubbed again with Dawn and a clean toothbrush and got some more oil out of skin folds around the cloaca, thighs and axilla, but there was not much left. The dermis is a bit erythematous with mild abrasions from scrubbing and possibly from the oil, but since the animal is on prophylactic antibiotics and seems more relaxed in water, we did not apply topical treatments. Also gave another 5 ml of toxiban PO today.

The turtle did urinate and defecate a small amount during handling- the feces was grey/brown and very runny- hard to tell if there was oil in it, but there did not appear to be toxiban.

The animal was placed back in water for the night, and we'll re-eval again tomorrow.

Hope that covers it okay for now- will continue to give updates etc as we go! Cheers, Car

Brian A Stacy, DVM, PhD, DACVP

NOAA/NMFS/Protected Resources

Marine Animal Disease Laboratory

University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine

Aquatic Animal Health Program

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